

**ATTACHMENT "B"**

**CLEAN COPY OF PENDING CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

- 1           1. A hosting service providing platform comprising;  
2           an automated computer cluster, said automated computer cluster including a  
3           control center; and  
4           a plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes, whereby said control center  
5           coordinates the functions of said plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes.
  
- 1           2. The platform as defined in Claim 1, wherein said plurality of hardware-  
2           independent cluster nodes further comprises a specialized distributed file system.
  
- 1           3. The platform as defined in Claim 2, wherein said specialized distributed file  
2           system is integrated and optimized for said automated computer cluster.
  
- 1           4. The platform as defined in Claim 2, wherein said specialized distributed file  
2           system further comprises data for a plurality of virtual environments.

1           5. The platform as defined in Claim 4, wherein each of said plurality of virtual  
2 environments further comprises:  
3           software providing emulation of a full service computer with its own operating  
4 system;  
5           a unique administrative "root" user for each member of said plurality of virtual  
6 environments;  
7           a file system template and file tree; and  
8           operating system parameters configuration;  
9 and further wherein each of said plurality of virtual environments does not include  
10 dedicated physical memory or any other hardware resources.

1           6. The platform as defined in Claim 4, wherein said specialized distributed file  
2 system further comprises:  
3           means for making file transactions from any file system changes made in at least  
4 one of said plurality of virtual environments;  
5           means for distributing said transactions to achieve the appropriate level of data  
6 accessibility; and  
7           means for permitting access to data from each member of said plurality of cluster  
8 nodes.

1           7. A method for providing a hosting service providing platform comprising the  
2 steps of:  
3           automating a computer cluster, further including  
4           establishing a control center; and  
5           operating a plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes, whereby said control  
6 center coordinates the functions of said plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes.

1           8. The method as defined in Claim 7, wherein the step of operating said plurality  
2 of hardware-independent cluster nodes further includes the step of implementing a  
3 specialized distributed file system, further wherein said specialized distributed file system  
4 is integrated and optimized for each member of said plurality of hardware-independent  
5 cluster nodes.

1           9. The method of Claim 8, wherein the step of operating a plurality of hardware-  
2 independent cluster nodes further includes the step of operating a plurality of virtual  
3 environments.

1           10. The method of Claim 9, wherein the step of operating said plurality of virtual  
2 environments further includes the steps of:  
3           installing software which emulates a full-service computer with its own operating  
4 system;  
5           establishing a unique administrative root user for each member of said plurality of  
6 virtual environments;  
7           establishing a file system template and file tree for each member of said plurality  
8 of virtual environments;  
9           implementing the operating system parameter configuration for each member of  
10 said plurality of virtual environments;  
11 and further wherein said step of operating said plurality of virtual environments does not  
12 include the step of dedicating physical memory or any other hardware resources.

1           11. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the step of operating said  
2 plurality of virtual environments further includes the steps of:  
3           making file transactions from any changes to said file system made in at least one  
4 of said plurality of virtual environments;  
5           distributing said file transactions to achieve the appropriate level of data  
6 accessibility; and  
7           permitting access to data from each member of said plurality of cluster nodes.

1           12. The method as defined in Claim 10, wherein the step of operating each  
2 member of said plurality of hardware-independent cluster nodes further includes the steps  
3 of:

4           installing a base operating system and network connection;  
5           providing access to the distributed file system containing the file system template  
6 for each virtual environment within said cluster node;  
7           accessing the resources of said cluster node; and  
8           utilizing said cluster node for launching new virtual environments.

1           13. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the step of permitting access to  
2 data from each of the plurality of virtual environments at said plurality of hardware-  
3 independent cluster nodes further includes the step of:  
4           restarting each virtual environment in a failed cluster node at another cluster node  
5 having appropriate resources available.

1           14. A method for utilizing a hosting service providing platform in an operating  
2 system comprising the steps of:  
3           requesting a service in said operating system;  
4           operating a virtual environment; and  
5           utilizing a specialized distributed file system.

1           15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           installing any application of said operating system.

1           16. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           configuring any application of said operating system.

1           17. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           launching any application of said operating system from said virtual environment.

1           18. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of operating said virtual  
2 environment further includes the step of:  
3           repairing remotely any failed software configuration of said virtual environment.

- 1           19. The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of utilizing a specialized
- 2 distributed file system further includes the step of:
- 3           achieving a corresponding fault tolerance level.